

COUNSELOR USE OF TIME

SUMMARY REPORT 2022-23

Introduction

[KRS 158.4416](#) states the following, “No later than Nov. 1, 2019, and each subsequent year, the local school district superintendent shall report to the department the number and placement of school counselors in the district. The report shall include the source of funding for each position, as well as a summary of the job duties and work undertaken by each counselor and the approximate percent of time devoted to each duty over the course of the year.”

This report provides an overview of the 2022 data.

About the Data

The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) conducted a survey of school counselors from across the state in the fall of 2022. The survey asked counselors to share:

- the percent of time they spent at a particular school,
- how their position was funded,
- the percent of time they spent on “appropriate” activities, which includes direct or indirect services provided to students and certain “other” school duties, and
- the percent of time they spent on “inappropriate” activities.

Responses were removed from the data set if they were incomplete, if the uses of time did not add up to 100%, or if there were major issues with reporting. Valid responses were collected from all 171 (excludes Craft Academy and Kentucky Tech Systems) school districts across the state, providing a district response rate of 100%. This is an increase of 24% over the previous year. The data revealed an increase of 453 over the previous year from 1,280 in 2021 to 1,743 school counselors in 2022. It is

important to note that Jefferson County data was not included in the 2021 report due to inconsistent reporting procedures. The addition of data received from Jefferson County Public School (JCPS) for 2022 significantly added to the number of counselors referenced in this increase (n=269 valid responses).

Of the 1,846 valid responses received this year:

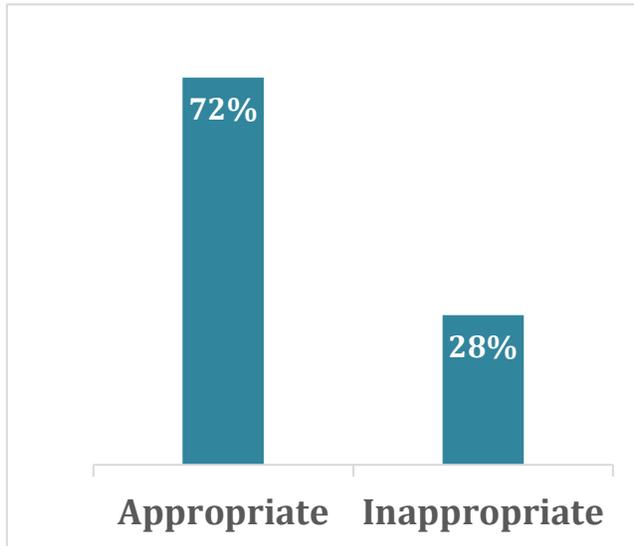
- 1% from early childhood centers,
- 39.2% from elementary schools,
- 22.2% from middle schools,
- 35.6% from high schools,
- and the remaining served multiple sites or grade levels.

The responses were collected from a geographically diverse subset of counselors. Every regional educational cooperative is represented in the data. The 2022 data showed all eight cooperatives having a 100% district participation. The table and map below show the number of responses by cooperative, and the percent of member districts that responded within each regional educational cooperative.

Responses by Regional Educational Cooperative

Regional Cooperative	Count of Valid Responses	2022% of Districts Reporting	2021% of Districts Reporting	Participation Rate Changes
NKCES	215	100%	81.30%	^18.7%
WKEC	201	100%	83.30%	^16.7%
KEDC	149	100%	71.40%	^28.6%
OVEC	140	100%	92.30%	^7.7%
KVEC	71	100%	73.30%	^26.7%
GRREC	300	100%	73.60%	^26.4%
SESC	204	100%	73.10%	^26.9%
CKEC	282	100%	86.40%	^13.6%
JCPS	277	NA	NA	NA
Model Lab	2	NA	NA	NA
KY School for the Blind	1	NA	NA	NA
KY School for the Deaf	4	NA	NA	NA

How do counselors use their time?



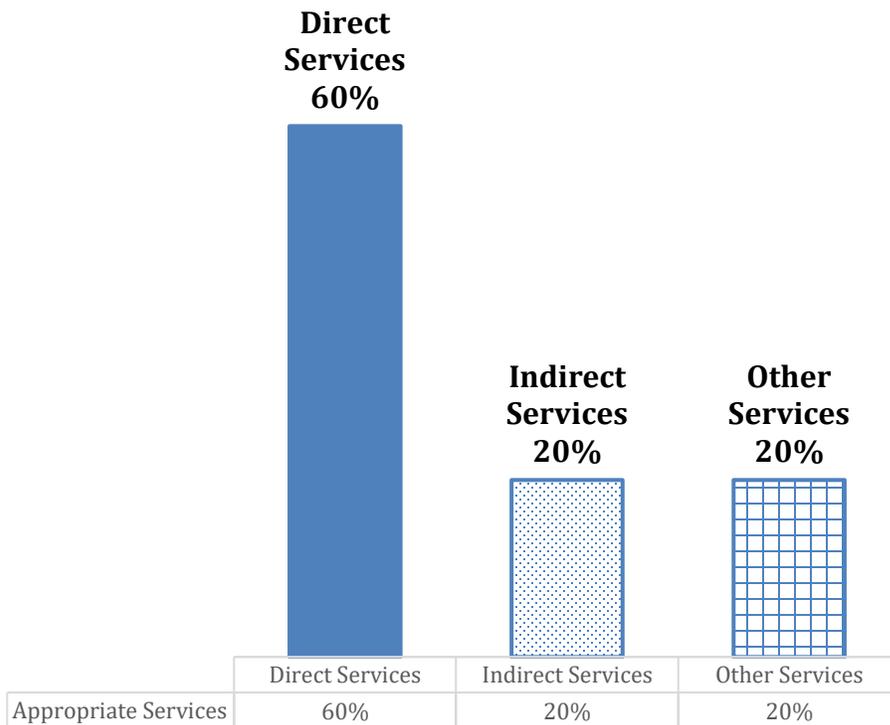
The survey addressed two distinct areas in terms of how Kentucky school counselors used their time. These can be classified broadly as “appropriate” and “inappropriate” activities. On average, school counselors reported almost one third of their time was spent on those activities classified as “inappropriate.”

As it relates to appropriate services, Kentucky school counselors reported that roughly 49.6% of their time was spent on “direct student services,” while the remainder of their

appropriate time was spent completing “indirect” or “other” services.

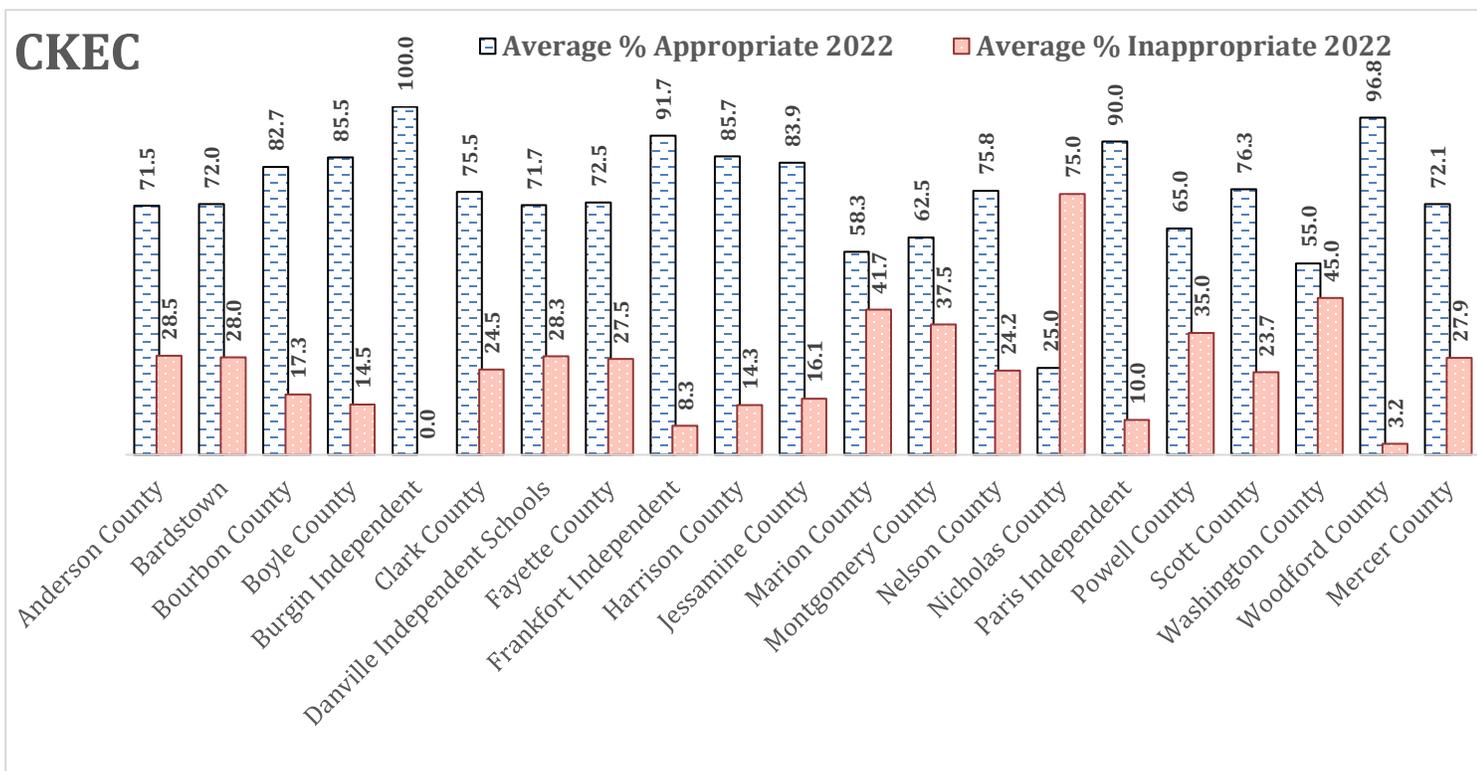
For the purposes of this report, these appropriate services can be identified as follows:

State Recommendation for Appropriate Use of Counselor Time

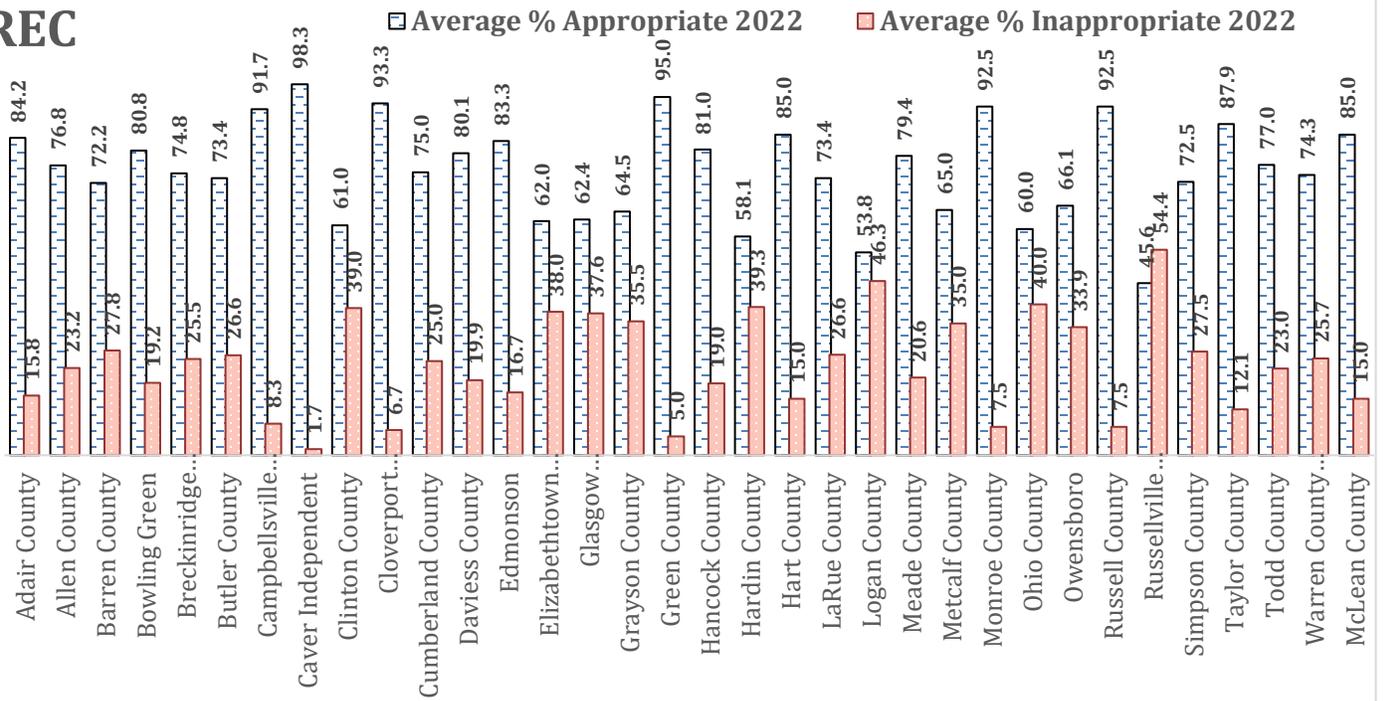


Direct Services	<i>Instruction: large group, small group and individual</i> <i>Appraisal and Advisement: analyze and assess students' abilities, interest, skills and achievement. Make recommendations based on tests, inventories and other data.</i> <i>Counseling: proactive check-in's, crisis situations, responsive.</i>
Indirect Services	<i>Consultation, Collaboration and Referrals on behalf of students with all stakeholders</i>
Other	<i>Program Planning, Analyzing Data, Creating Action Plans and Reports, Conferences, Minimal School Functioning Duties</i>

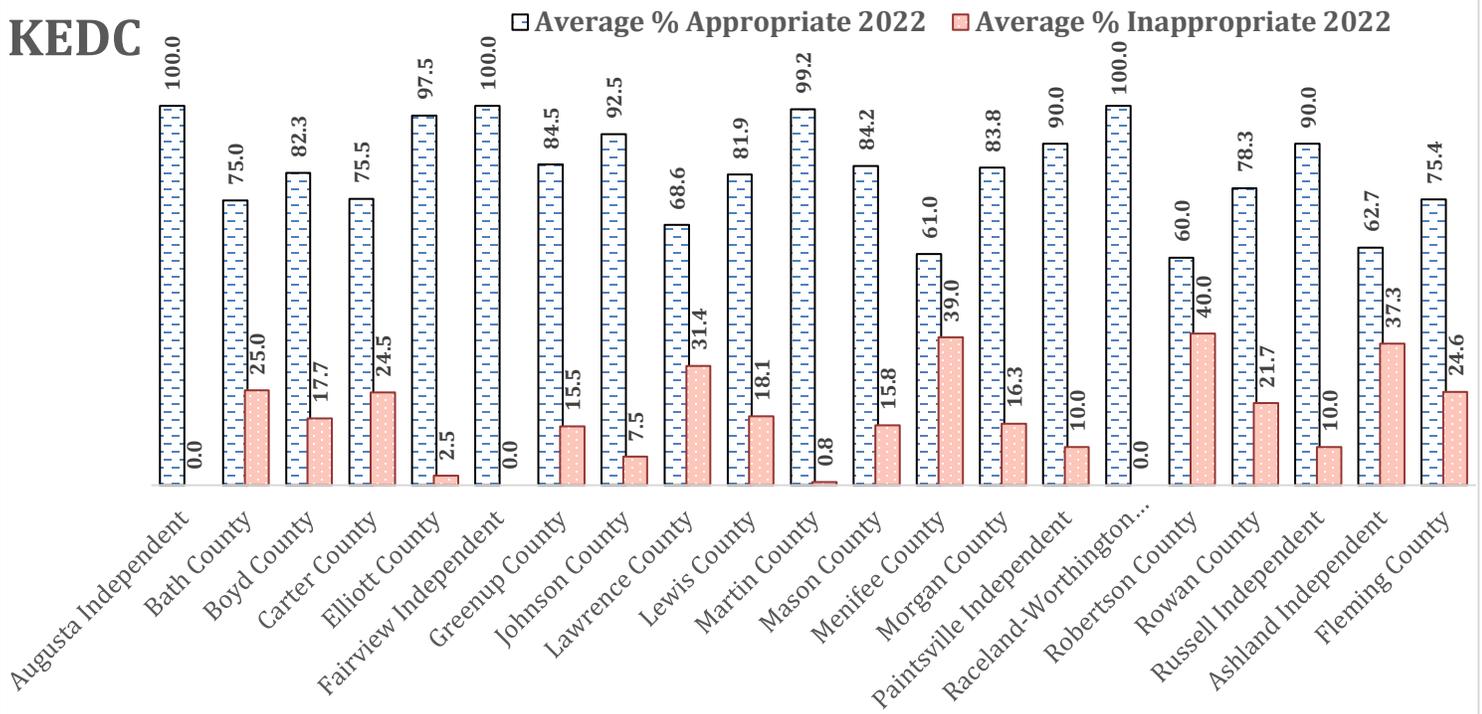
The following charts will show by district, within each cooperative, how districts reported using their time in the two main categories.



GRREC

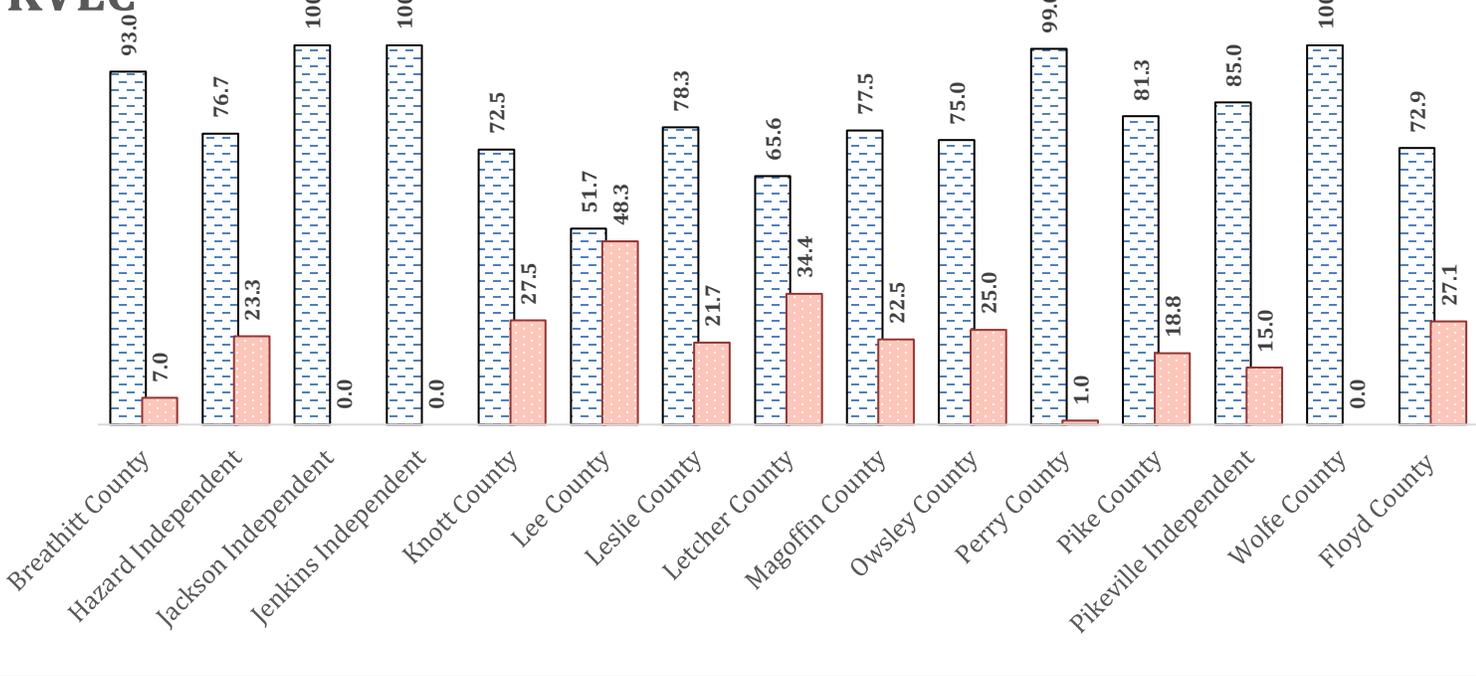


KEDC



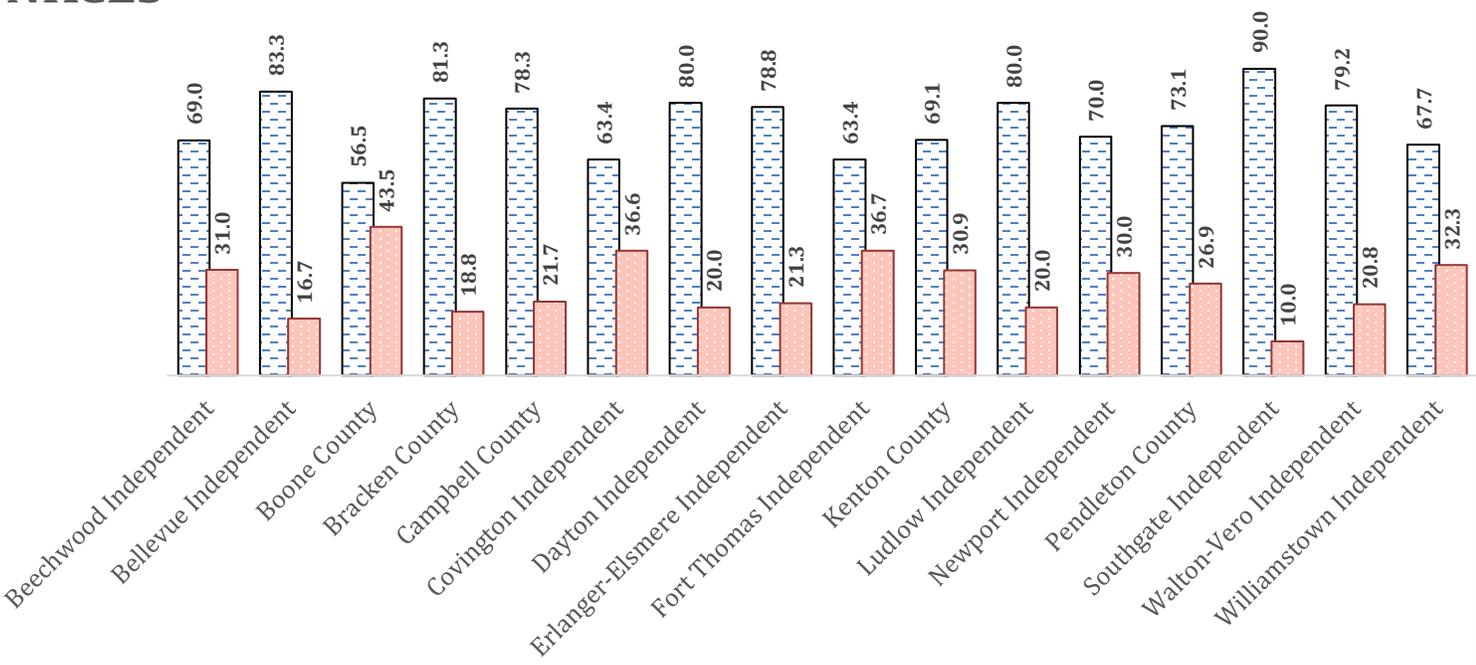
KVEC

□ Average % Appropriate 2022 ■ Average % Inappropriate 2022



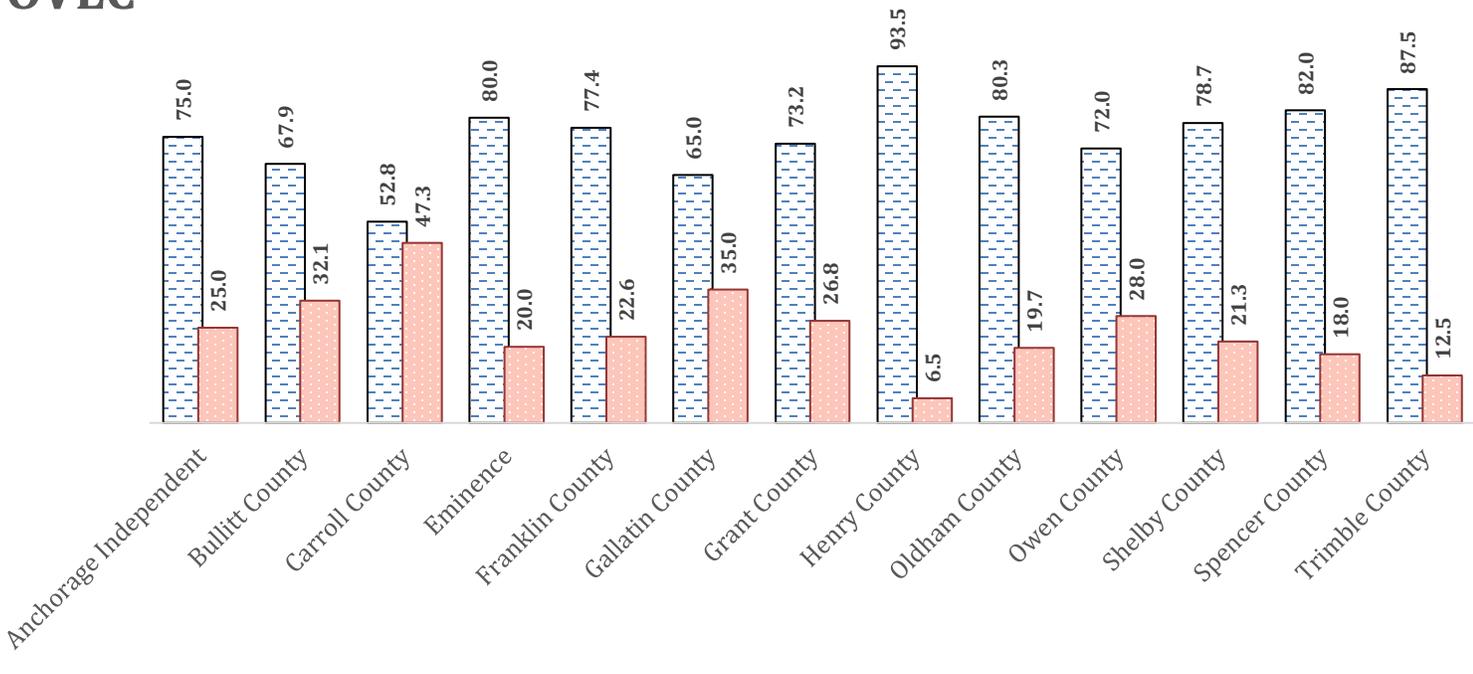
NKCES

□ Average % Appropriate 2022 ■ Average % Inappropriate 2022



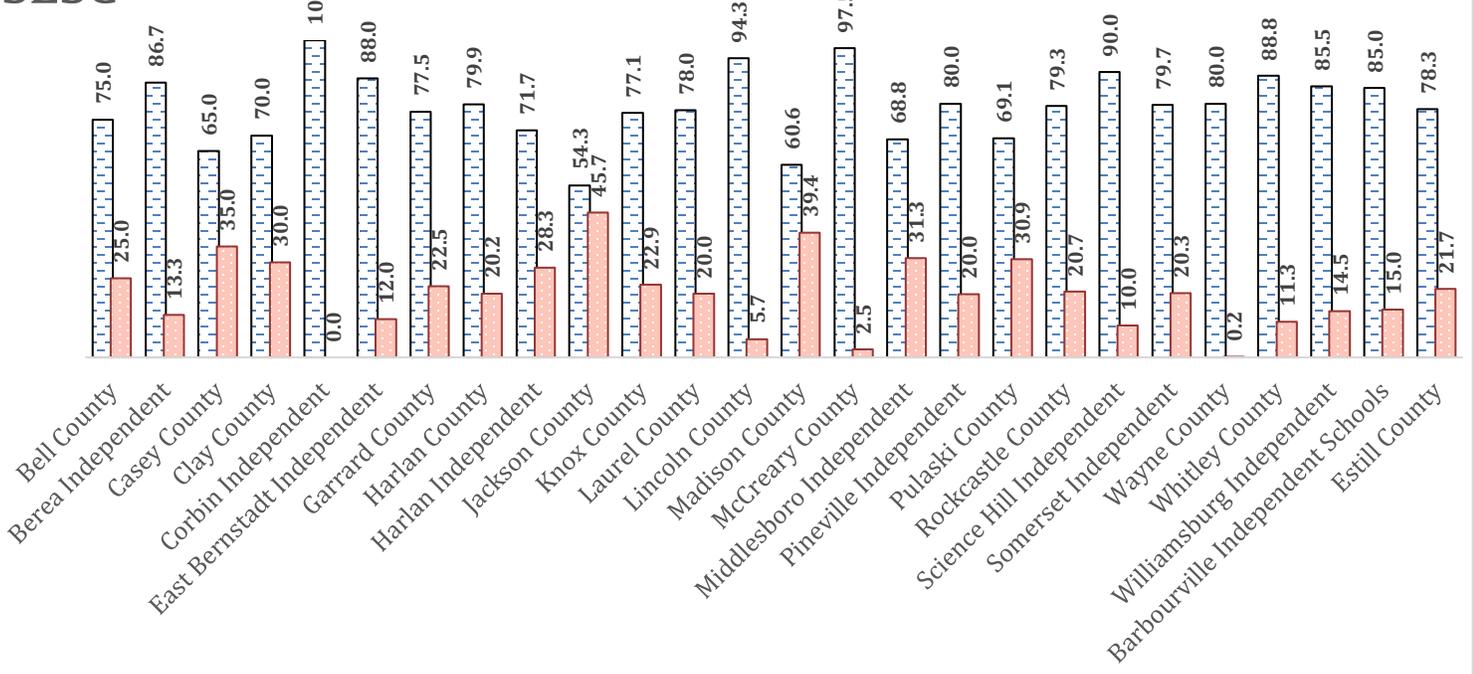
OVEC

■ Average % Appropriate 2022
 ■ Average % Inappropriate 2022



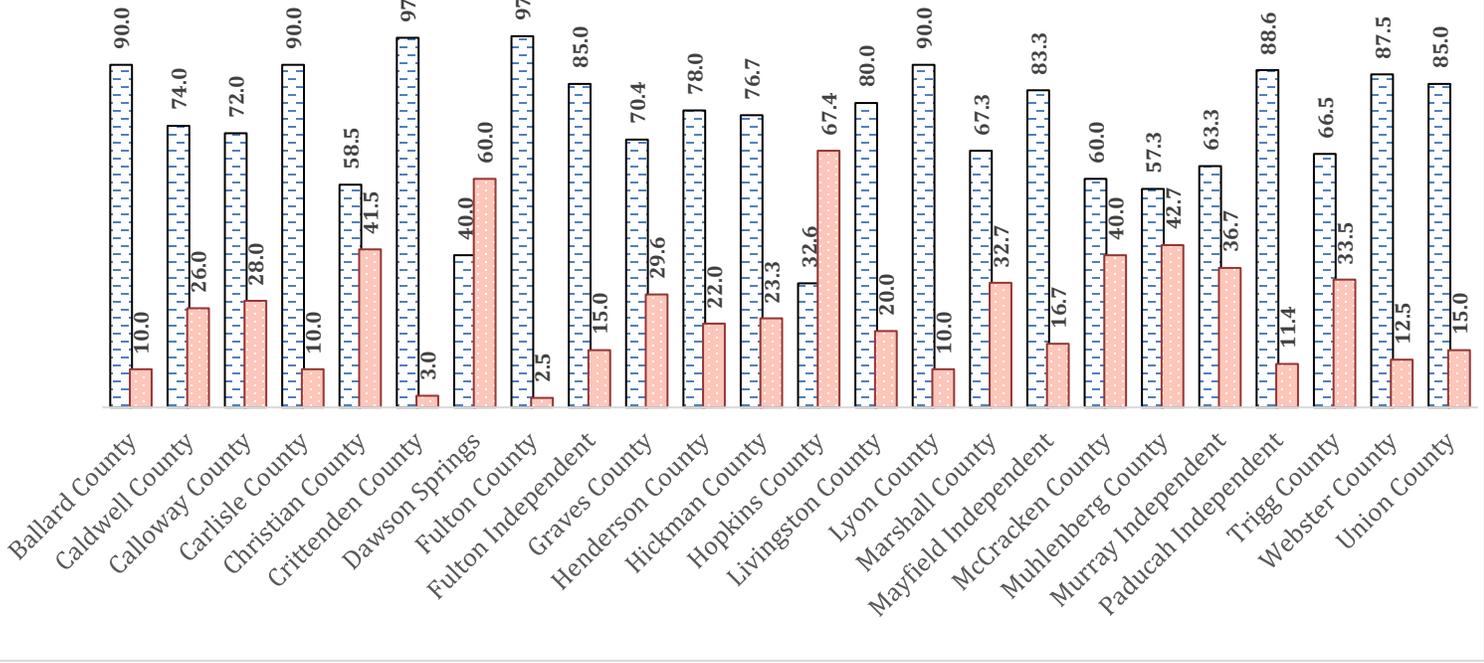
SESC

■ Average % Appropriate 2022
 ■ Average % Inappropriate 2022



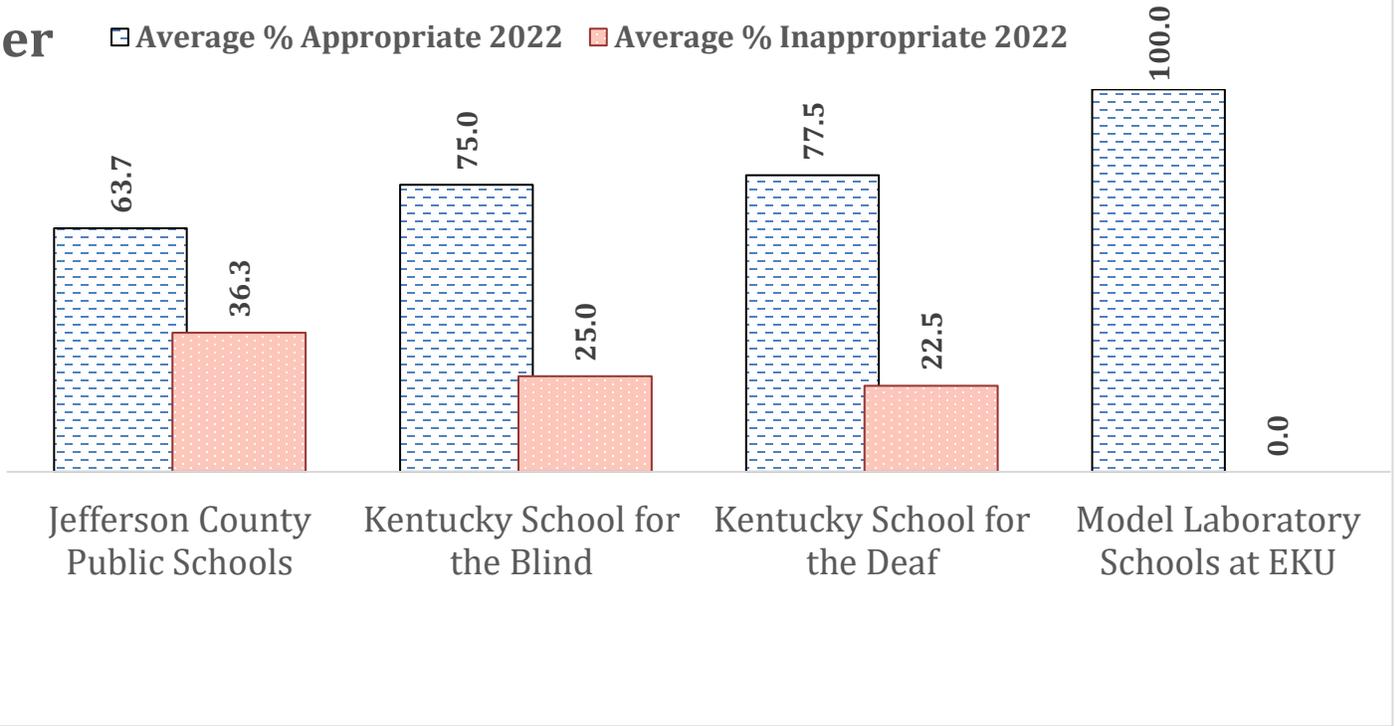
WKEC

□ Average % Appropriate 2022 ■ Average % Inappropriate 2022



Other

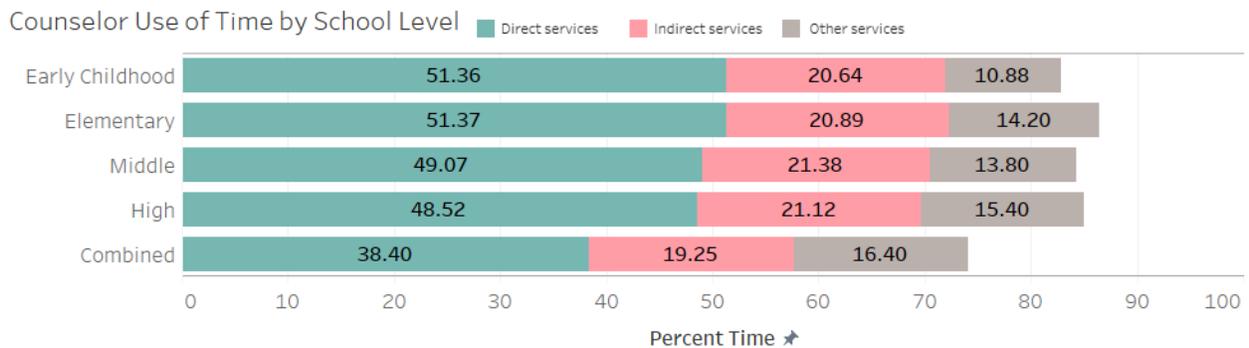
□ Average % Appropriate 2022 ■ Average % Inappropriate 2022



The distribution of school counselor time between appropriate and inappropriate activities is approximately 70% and 20% respectively. This distribution is the same across grade levels (see below).

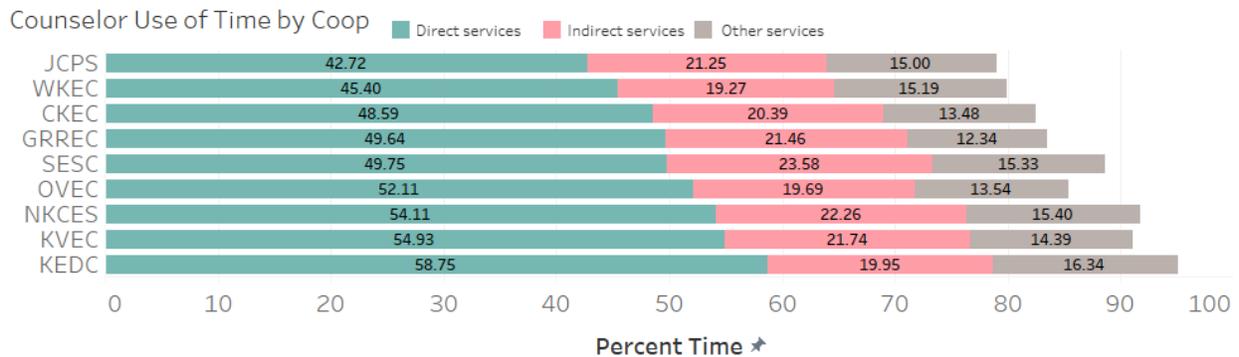
	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Early Childhood	73 ± 23	28 ± 24
Elementary	74 ± 18	26 ± 18
Middle	70 ± 19	29 ± 19
High	71 ± 19	29 ± 19
Combined	71 ± 19	29 ± 19

The values shown are the mean value with their corresponding standard deviations, indicating the range where most of the respondents' answers can be found. For example, when looking at appropriate activities, the majority of respondents' use of time from the Early Childhood category shows a mean average or typical use of time as 73% for respondents with a standard deviation of +/-23%. This would be interpreted as spending between 50 to 96% of their time on appropriate activities when you consider the standard deviation. The Combined category consists of schools that mix grades associated with elementary, middle and high school (K through 8, 6 through 12, etc.).



Of the time Kentucky school counselors spent on appropriate activities, between 40 and 50% was spent on direct student services. Schools in the “Combined” category showed the lowest percent of time spent in direct student service, but this group is composed of only 20 schools. The rest of this time was split about evenly between indirect and other student services.

There are also some geographical trends in terms of how counselors use their time. The table below shows the mean and standard deviation of the responses within each of the regional cooperatives.



What are inappropriate activities?

In the survey, respondents were given the option to specify which inappropriate activities they were asked to do. Not every respondent completed this question, so the answers presented are not representative. However, they do help provide some indication of the types of additional activities counselors are being asked to conduct in schools across the Commonwealth. The top responses and a count of the number of times they showed up in the data are below.

Inappropriate Activity	Count
Scheduling (Master/Student)	729
ARC	718
504 Plan	680
Supervise (lunch, common areas)	648
Testing (state, aptitude, achievement, general)	543
Records (entering, maintaining, sending)	341
Data (entering, maintaining)	255
Paperwork (new student, coordinating)	218
COVID (tasks associated with the pandemic)	200
None	120

The use of counselor time on tasks associated with COVID-19 will likely disappear with time.

Elevating Student Voice Regarding School Counselors: KDE Student Advisory Council Feedback

In December of 2022, the KDE Commissioner’s Student Advisory Council gave feedback regarding their experiences with school counselors. In summary, students stated that access to school counselors is minimal. Many of their peers wait weeks to months before being seen by a school counselor. They recognize the amount of responsibilities placed on the school counselors that take away their time directly with students including building schedules and leading meetings. **Their recommendations are to see school counselors focus more on student mental health for the majority of their time with college and career readiness and academic counseling being second in their delivery of services. The mental health needs vastly outweigh any other needs of students at this point. For more information or questions, please contact [Heather Bushelman](#).**

School Safety

[The Office of State School Security Marshal Report](#) was released in accordance with the [School Safety and Resilience Act](#). It concluded the following information regarding school counselors:

- A certified school counselor is currently employed at 93.41% of our schools.
- 56% of our school districts reported they are not meeting the ratio goal of one school counselor or school-based mental health provider to 250 students.
- Currently, Kentucky’s overall ratio is 1 school counselor to 348 students.
- 96.16% of schools responded that school counselors document time spent with students.

Based on their findings, the Office of State School Security Marshal is continuing to advocate for the School Safety and Resilience Act being fully funded and reducing the school counselor to student ratio.

Next Steps

Based on the 2022 data provided from Kentucky's Use of Time for School Counselors Report, next steps to consider for district and school leaders with school counselors who are not currently meeting the use of time are as follows:

1. Consider the allocations the district uses for school counselors and school-based mental health providers. Determine if there is enough to allow students access to these professionals as needed.
2. Conversations between stakeholders and school counselors will collaboratively ensure what the true role of a school counselor is recommended to be based on national and statewide guidance. Ensuring that school counselor advisories are in place at each school and consist of diverse stakeholders including district and school leaders, families, students and other stakeholders is ideal. For more on school counselor advisories, please read this resource and discuss it with school counselors.
3. Analyze school counselors' and school-based mental health providers' use of time to show what duties may be considered inappropriate for their role. Discuss this analysis with your school counselors.
4. Reflect on the following question: Does the district need any type of training or coaching to ensure school counselors and school-based mental health providers understand their role within the school to collaboratively work with the administration?